

# PIPES OF PAN

NO. IV

## SONGS FROM A NORTHERN GARDEN

BY  
BLISS CARMAN





















# PIPES OF PAN

BY  
BLISS CARMAN

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SONGS FROM A NORTHERN GARDEN

*IN PREPARATION*

FROM THE BOOK OF PIERROT

---

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

*New England Building  
Boston, Mass.*





# PIPES OF PAN

*Number Four*

SONGS FROM

BY

AUTHOR OF "PIPES OF PAN,"  
"SAPPHO," "THE KINSHIP  
OF NATURE," "THE  
FRIENDSHIP OF  
ART," ETC.



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## OUR LADY OF THE RAIN.

Across the purple valleys,  
Along the misty hills,  
By murmur-haunted rivers  
And silver-gurgling rills,  
By woodland, swamp and barren,  
By road and field and plain,  
Arrives the Green Enchantress,  
Our Lady of the Rain.

Her pure and mystic planet  
Is lighted in the west;  
In ashy-rose and lilac  
Of melting evening dressed,  
With golden threads of sunset  
Inwoven in her gown,



With glamour of the springtime  
She has bewitched the town.

Her look is soft with dreaming  
On old forgotten years;  
Her eyes are grave and tender  
With unpermitted tears;  
For she has known the sorrows  
Of all this weary earth,  
Yet ever brings it gladness,  
Retrieval and new birth.

And when her splendid pageant,  
Sidereal and slow,  
With teeming stir and import  
Sweeps up from line to snow,  
There's not an eager mortal  
But would arise and make  
Some brave unpromised venture  
For her immortal sake.



For no man knows what power  
Is sleeping in the seed,  
What destiny may slumber  
Within the smallest deed.  
In calm no fret can hurry,  
Nor any fear detain,  
She brings our own to meet us —  
Our Lady of the Rain.

She saw the red clay moulded  
And quickened into man;  
The sweetness of her spirit  
Within his pulses ran;  
The ardour of her being  
Was in his veins like fire,  
The unreluctant passion,  
The unallayed desire.

'Twas she who brought rejoicing  
To Babylon and Ur.



To Carthage and to Sidon  
Men came to worship her.  
Her soft spring rites were honoured  
At Argolis and Troy,  
And dark Caldean women  
Gave thanks to her for joy.

With cheer and exaltation  
With hope for all things born,  
To hearten the disheartened,  
To solace the forlorn,  
Too gentle and all-seeing  
For judgment or disdain,  
She comes with loving kindness —  
Our Lady of the Rain.

With magical resurgence  
For all the sons of men  
She crosses winter's frontier,  
They know not whence nor when.



Yet silently as sunlight  
Along the forest floor  
Her step is on the threshold,  
Her shadow at the door.

On many a lonely clearing  
Among the timbered hills  
She calls across the distance,  
Until the twilight fills  
With voice of loosened waters,  
And from the marshy ground  
The frogs begin refilling  
Their flutes with joyous sound.

Then note by note is lifted  
The chorus clear and shrill,  
And all who hear her summons  
Must answer to her will ;  
For she will not abandon  
The old Pandean strain



---

OUR LADY OF THE RAIN

---

That called the world from chaos —  
Our Lady of the Rain.

And still her wondrous music  
Comes up with early spring,  
And meadowland and woodland  
With silver wildness ring;  
The sparrow by the roadside,  
The wind among the reeds,  
Whoever hears that piping  
Must follow where it leads.

Though no man knows the reason,  
Nor how the rumour spread,  
Through canyon-streeted cities  
Her message has been sped;  
And some forgotten longing  
To hear a bluebird sing  
Bids folk from open windows  
Look forth — and it is spring.



Come out into the sunshine,  
You dwellers of the town,  
Put by your anxious dolors,  
And cast your sorrows down.  
O, starved and pampered people,  
How futile is your gain!  
Behold, there comes to heal you  
Our Lady of the Rain.

Go where the buds are breaking  
Upon the cherry bough,  
And the strong sap is mounting  
In every tree-trunk now;  
Where orchards are in blossom  
On every spray and spire,  
Go hear the orioles whistle  
And pass like flecks of fire.

Go find the first arbutus  
Within the piney wood,



And learn from that shy dweller  
How sweet is solitude;  
Go listen to the white-throat  
In some remote ravine  
Rehearse in tranquil patience  
His ecstasy serene.

Go down along the beaches  
And borders of the sea,  
When golden morning kindles  
That blue immensity,  
And watch the white sails settle  
Below the curving rim  
Of this frail vast of colour,  
Diaphanous and dim.

Go watch by brimming river  
Or reedy-marged lagoon  
The wild geese row their galley  
Across the rising moon,



That comes up like a bubble  
Out of the black fir-trees,  
And ask what mind invented  
Such miracles as these.

Who came when we were sleeping  
And wrought this deathless lure,  
This vivid vernal wonder  
Improbable and sure?  
Where Algol and Bootes  
Mark their enormous range,  
What seraph passed in power  
To touch the world with change?

What love's unerring purpose  
Reveals itself anew  
In these mysterious transports  
Of tone and shape and hue?  
Doubt not the selfsame impulse  
Throbs in thy restless side,



Craves at the gates of being,  
And would not be denied.

Be thou the west wind's brother,  
And kin to bird and tree,  
The soul of spring may utter  
Her oracles to thee;  
Her breath shall give thee courage,  
Her tan shall touch thy cheek,  
The words of sainted lovers  
Be given thee to speak.

Fear not the mighty instinct,  
The great Aprilian Creed;  
The House of Spring is open  
And furnished for thy need.  
But fear the little wisdom,  
The paltry doubt and vain,  
And trust without misgiving  
Our Lady of the Rain.



What foot would fail to meet her,  
And who would stay indoor,  
When April in her glory  
Comes triumphing once more —  
When adder-tongue and tulip  
Put on their coats of gold,  
And all the world goes love-mad  
For beauty as of old?

At every year's returning  
The swallows will be here,  
The stalls be gay with jonquils,  
The dogwood reappear;  
And up from the southwestward  
Come back to us again  
With sorceries of gladness —  
Our Lady of the Rain.



## IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN.

In a garden over Grand Pré, dewy in the morning  
sun,  
Here in earliest September with the summer  
nearly done,  
Musing on the lovely world and all its beauties,  
one by one!

Bluets, marigolds, and asters, scarlet poppies,  
purple phlox, —  
Who knows where the key is hidden to those frail  
yet perfect locks  
In the tacit doors of being where the soul stands  
still and knocks?



There is Blomidon's blue sea-wall, set to guard  
the turbid straits

Where the racing tides have entry; but who  
keeps for us the gates

In the mighty range of silence where man's spirit  
calls and waits?

Where is Glooscaap? There's a legend of that  
saviour of the West,

The benign one, whose all-wisdom loved beasts  
well, though men the best,

Whom the tribes of Minas leaned on, and their  
villages had rest.

Once the lodges were defenceless, all the warriors  
being gone

On a hunting or adventure. Like a panther on  
a fawn,

On the helpless stole a war-band, ambushed to  
attack at dawn.



But with night came Glooscaap. Sleeping he surprised them; waved his bow;  
Through the summer leaves descended a great frost, as white as snow;  
Sealed their slumber to eternal peace and stillness long ago.

Then a miracle. Among them, while still death undid their thews,  
Slept a captive with her children. Such the magic he could use,  
She arose unharmed with morning, and departing, told the news.

He, too, when the mighty Beaver had the country for his pond,  
All the way from the Pereau here to Bass River and beyond,  
Stoned the rascal; drained the Basin; routed out that vagabond.



You can see yourself Five Islands Glooscaap  
flung at him that day,  
When from Blomidon to Sharp he tore the Beaver's dam away, —  
Cleared the channel, and the waters thundered  
out into the bay.

*(Do we idle, little children? Ah, well, there is  
hope, maybe,  
In mere beauty which enraptures just such ne'er-  
do-wells as we!  
I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be  
calling me!)*

Here he left us — see the orchards, red and gold  
in every tree! —  
All the land from Gaspereau to Portapique and  
Cheverie,  
All the garden lands of Minas and a passage  
out to sea.



You can watch the white-sailed vessels through  
the meadows wind and creep.

All day long the pleasant sunshine, and at night  
the starry sleep,

While the labouring tides that rest not have their  
business with the deep!

So I get my myth and legend of a breaker-down  
of bars,

Putting gateways in the mountains with their  
thousand-year-old scars,

That the daring and the dauntless might steer  
outward by the stars.

So my demiurgic hero lays a frost on all our  
fears.

Dead the grisly superstition, dead the bigotry  
of years,

Dead the tales that frighten children, when the  
pure white light appears.



Thus did Glooscaap of the mountains. What  
doth Balder of the flowers,  
Balder, the white lord of April, who comes back  
amid the showers  
And the sunshine to the Northland to revive  
this earth of ours?

First, how came my garden, where untimely not  
a leaf may wilt?  
For a thousand years the currents trenched the  
rock and wheeled the silt,  
Dredged and filled and smoothed and levelled,  
toiling that it might be built.

For the moon pulled and the sun pushed on the  
derrick of the tide;  
And a great wind heaved and blustered, — swung  
the weight round with a stride,  
Mining tons of red detritus out of the old moun-  
tain side, —



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

Bore them down and laid them even by the mouth  
of stream and rill

For the quiet lowly doorstep, for cemented joist  
and sill

Of our Grand Pré, where the cattle lead their  
shadows or lie still.

So my garden floor was founded by the labour-  
ing frugal sea,

Deep and virginal as Eden, for the flowers that  
were to be,

All for my great drowsy poppies and my mari-  
golds and me.

Who had guessed the unsubstantial end and out-  
come of such toil, —

These, the children of a summer, whom a breath  
of frost would foil,

I, almost as faint and fleeting as my brothers of  
the soil?



Did those vague and drafty sea-tides, as they  
    journeyed, feel the surge  
Of the prisoned life that filled them seven times  
    full from verge to verge,  
Mounting to some far achievement where its  
    ardour might emerge?

Are they blinder of a purpose in their courses  
    fixed and sure,  
Those sea arteries whose heavings throb through  
    Nature's vestiture,  
Than my heart's frail valves and hinges which  
    so perilously endure?

Do I say to it, "Give over!" — Can I will, and  
    it will cease?

Nay, it stops but with destruction; knows no res-  
    pite nor release.

I, who did not start its pulses, cannot bid them  
    be at peace.



Thus the great deep, framed and fashioned to  
a thought beyond its own,  
Rocked by tides that race or sleep without its  
will from zone to zone,  
Setting door-stones for a people in a century un-  
known,

Sifted for me and my poppies the red earth we  
love so well.  
Gently there, my fine logician, brooding in your  
lone grey cell!  
Was it all for our contentment such a miracle  
befell?

No; because my drowsy poppies and my mari-  
golds and I  
Have this human need in common, nodding as  
the wind goes by;  
There is that supreme within us no one life can  
satisfy.



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

With their innocent grave faces lifted up to meet  
my own,  
They are but the stranger people, swarthy children  
of the sun,  
Gypsies tenting at our door to vanish ere the  
year is done.

*(How we idle, little children! Still our best of  
tasks may be,  
From distraction and from discord without base-  
ness to get free.  
I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be  
calling me!)*

Humbly, then, most humbly ever, little brothers  
of the grass,  
With *Aloha* at your doorways I salute you as  
you pass,  
I who wear the mortal vesture, as our custom  
ever was.



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

Known for kindred by the habit, by the tanned  
and crimson stain,  
Earthlings in the garb ensanguined just so long  
as we remain,  
You for days and I for seasons mystics by the  
common strain,

Till we tread the virgin threshold of a great moon  
red and low,  
Clean and joyous while we tarry, and uncraven  
when we go  
From the rooftree of the rain-wind and the  
broad eaves of the snow.

And this thing called life, which frets us like a  
fever without name,  
Soul of man and seed of poppy no mortality can  
tame,  
Smouldering at the core of beauty till it breaks in  
perfect flame, —



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

What it is I know not; only I know they and  
I are one,  
By the lure that bids us linger in the great House  
of the Sun,  
By the fervour that sustains us at the door we cannot shun.

From a little wider prospect, I survey their bright  
domain;  
On a rounder dim horizon, I behold the plough-  
man rain;  
All I have and hold so lightly, they will perish to  
attain.

Waking at the word of April with the South  
Wind at her heels,  
We await the revelation locked beneath the four  
great seals,  
Ice and snow and dark and silence, where the  
Northern search-light wheels.



Waiting till our Brother Balder walks the lovely  
earth once more,

With the robin in the fir-top, with the rain-wind  
at the door,

With the old unwearied gladness to revive us and  
restore,

We abide the raptured moment, with the patience  
of a stone,

Like ephemera our kindred, transmigrant from  
zone to zone,

To that last fine state of being where they live  
on joy alone.

O great Glooscaap and kind Balder, born of  
human heart's desire,

When earth's need took shape and substance, and  
the impulse to aspire

Passed among the new-made peoples, touching the  
red clay with fire,



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

By the myth and might of beauty, lead us and  
allure us still,

Past the open door of wonder and oblivion's  
granite sill,

Past the curtain of the sunset in the portals of the  
hill,

To new provinces of wisdom, sailless latitudes of  
soul.

I for one must keep the splendid faith in good  
your lives extol,

Well assured the love you lived by is my being's  
source and goal.

Fearless when the will bids "Venture," or the  
sleepless mind bids "Know,"

Here among my lowly neighbours blameless let  
me come and go,

Till I, too, receive the summons to the silent  
Tents of Snow.



---

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

---

In a garden over Grand Pré, bathed in the serenity

Of the early autumn sunlight, came these quiet thoughts to me,

While the wind went down the orchard to the dikes and out to sea.

*(Idling yet? My flowery children, only far too well I see*

*How this day will glow forever in my life that is to be!*

*I must go and pick my apples. There is Malyn calling me!)*



## THE KEEPERS OF SILENCE

My hillside garden half-way up  
The mountains from the purple sea,  
Beholds the pomp of days go by  
In summer's gorgeous pageantry.

I watch the shadows of the clouds  
Stream over Grand Pré in the sun,  
And the white fog seethe up and spill  
Over the rim of Blomidon.

For past the mountains to the North,  
Like a great caldron of the tides,  
Is Fundy, boiling round their base,  
And ever fuming up their sides.



---

THE KEEPERS OF SILENCE

---

Yet here within my valley world  
No breath of all that tumult stirs;  
The little orchards sleep in peace;  
Forever dream the dark blue firs.

And while far up the gorges sweep  
The silver legions of the showers,  
I have communion with the grass  
And conversation with the flowers.

More wonderful than human speech  
Their dialect of silence is,  
The simple Dorian of the fields,  
So full of homely subtleties.

When the dark pansies nod to say  
Good morning to the marigolds,  
Their velvet taciturnity  
Reveals as much as it withholds.



---

THE KEEPERS OF SILENCE

---

I always half expect to hear  
Some hint of what they mean to do ;  
But never is their fine reserve  
Betrayed beyond a smile or two.

Yet very well at times I seem  
To understand their reticence,  
And so, long since, I came to love  
My little brothers by the fence.

Perhaps some August afternoon,  
When earth is only half-aware,  
They will unlock their heart for once, —  
How sad if I should not be there!



## AT HOME AND ABROAD.

My modest Northern garden  
Is full of yellow flowers,  
And quaking leaves and sunlight  
And long noon hours.

It hangs upon the hillside  
Above the little town ;  
And there in pleasant weather  
You can look far down,

To the broad dikes of Grand Pré  
Roamed over by the herds,  
And the purple Minas water  
Where fish the white sea-birds.



I watch the little vessels,  
Where the slow rivers glide  
Between the grassy orchards,  
Come in upon the tide.

For daily there accomplished  
Is the sea's legerdemain,  
To fill the land with rivers  
And empty it again.

Before you lies North Mountain,  
Built like a long sea-wall —  
A wonder in blue summer  
And in the crimson fall.

The sea-fogs cloud and mantle  
Along its fir-dark crest,  
While under it the fruit-lands  
Have shelter and have rest.



And when the goblin moonlight  
Loiters upon her round  
Of valley, marsh and mountain  
To bless my garden-ground, —

(The harvest moon that lingers  
Until her task is done,  
And all the grain is ripened  
For her great lord, the sun,)

I know that there due northward,  
Under the polar star,  
Sir Blomidon is fronting  
Whatever storms there are.

I cannot see those features  
I love so well by day,  
Calmed by a thousand summers,  
Scarred by the winter's play;



Yet there above the battle  
Of the relentless tides,  
Under the solemn starlight  
He muses and abides.

And in the magic stillness,  
The moonlight's ghostly gleam  
Makes me its sylvan brother,  
To rove the world a-dream.

That wayward and oblivious  
Mortal I seem to be  
Shall habit not forever  
This garden by the sea.

Not Blomidon nor Grand Pré  
Shall be his lasting home,  
Nor all the Ardise country  
Give room enough to roam.



Even to-night a little  
He strays, and will not bide  
The gossip of the flowers,  
The rumour of the tide.

He must be forth and seeking,  
Beyond this garden-ground,  
The arm-in-arm companion  
For whom the sun goes round.

And in the soft May weather  
I walk with you again,  
Where the terraces of Meudon  
Look down upon the Seine.



## KILLOOLEET.

There's a wonderful woodland singer  
In the North, called Killooleet, —  
That is to say Little Sweetvoice  
In the tongue of the Milicete,

The tribe of the upper Wolaastook,  
Who range that waterway  
From the blue fir hills of its sources  
To the fogs and tides of the bay.

All day long in the sunshine,  
All night long through the rains,  
On the grey wet cedar barrens  
And the lonely blueberry plains,



---

K I L L O O L E E T

---

You may hear Killooleet singing,  
Hear his *O sweet*  
(Then a grace-note, then the full cadence),  
*Killooleet, Killooleet, Killooleet!*

Whenever you dip a paddle,  
Or set a pole in the stream,  
Killooleet marks the ripple,  
Killooleet knows the gleam;

Killooleet gives you welcome,  
Killooleet makes you free  
With the great sweet wilderness freedom  
That holds over land and sea.

You may slide your birch through the alders,  
Or camp where the rapids brawl,  
The first glad forest greeting  
Will still be Killooleet's call.



---

K I L L O O L E E T

---

Wherever you drive a tent-pin,  
Or kindle a fire at night,  
Killooleet comes to the ridge-pole,  
Killooleet answers the light.

The dark may silence the warblers;  
The heavy and thunderous hush  
That comes before storm may stifle  
The pure cool notes of the thrush;

The waning season may sober  
Bobolink, bluebird, and quail;  
But Killooleet's stainless transport  
Will not diminish nor fail.

Henceforth you shall love and fear not,  
Remembering Killooleet's song  
Haunting the wild waste places,  
Deliberate, tranquil, and strong;



And so you shall come without cunning,  
But wise in the simpler lore,  
To the House of the Little Brothers,  
And God will open the door.



## ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S ON THE HILL.

*“ Bartholomew with his cold dew.”*

Bartholomew, my brother,  
I like your roomy church ;  
I like your way of leaving  
No sinners in the lurch.

I wish the world were wealthy  
In ministers like you,  
When at the lovely August  
You give the blessed dew.

I love your rambling Abbey,  
So long ago begun,  
Whose choirs are in the tree-tops,  
Whose censer is the sun.



Its windows are the morning;  
Its rafters are the stars;  
The fog-banks float like incense  
Up from its purple floors.

And where the ruddy apples  
Make lamps in the green gloom,  
The flowers in congregation  
Are never pressed for room;

But in your hillside chapel,  
Gay with its gorgeous paints,  
They bow before the Presence,—  
Sweet merry little saints!



## THE CHURCH OF THE LEAVES.

In French Canadian legendry,  
A rising from the dead recurs  
Each Christmastide. The old *curé*,  
With his parishioners

Around him, in the night returns;  
And while his voice renews its bond  
In the beloved offices,  
The ghostly flock respond.

Just so, we keep the forms of faith  
That wrought and moved us long ago;  
We mark the height man's soul attained,  
Forgetting it must grow.



Those venerable outgrown shells  
Wherefrom the radiant life is fled, —  
We wrong with our idolatry  
The dogmas of the dead.

But He who walked with the world-soul  
At twilight in Gethsemane,  
Breathing among the listening boughs  
Sweet prayers of charity,

Must daily with the wind return  
About the dim world, to renew  
The trembling litanies of the leaves,  
The blessings of the dew.

He must revive with wind-sweet voice  
The gospel hardly known to flesh,  
Till the same spirit speaks again,  
Interpreting afresh ;



Till the vast house of trees and air  
Reverberates from roof to floor  
With meanings of mysterious things  
We need to ask no more.

For still He walks these shadowy aisles,  
Dreaming of beauties still to be,  
More manly than our manliest,  
Whose thought and love were free.

The pines are all His organ pipes,  
And the great rivers are His choir;  
And creatures of the field and tide  
That reckon not, yet aspire,

Our brothers of the tardy hope,  
Put forth their strength in senses dim,  
Threading the vast, they know not why,  
Through eons up to Him.



I see Him in the orchard glooms,  
Watching the russet apples tan,  
With the serene regard of one  
Who is more God than man.

And where the silent valley leads  
The small white water through the hills,  
And the black spruces stand unmoved,  
And quiet sunlight fills

The world and time with large slow peace,  
It is His patience waiting there  
Response from lives whose breath is but  
The echo of His prayer.

Brother of Nazareth, behold,  
We, too, perceive this life expand  
Beyond the daily need, for use  
Thy thought must understand.



Not for ourselves alone we strive,  
Since Thy perfection manifest  
Bids self resign what self desired,  
Postponing good for best.

And in the far unfretted years,  
The generations we uphold  
Shall reach the measure of Thy heart,  
The stature of Thy mould.



## THE DEEP HOLLOW ROAD.

Cool in the summer mountain's heart,  
It lies in dim mysterious shade,  
Left of the highway turning in  
With grassy rut and easy grade.

The marshes and the sea behind,  
The solemn fir-blue hills before;  
Here is the inn for Heavy-heart  
And this is weary Free-foot's door.

O fellows, I have known it long;  
For joy of life turn in with me;  
We bivouac with peace to-night,  
And good-bye to the brawling sea.



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THE DEEP HOLLOW ROAD

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You hear? That's master thrush. He knows  
The voluntaries fit for June,  
And when to falter on the flute  
In the satiety of noon.

A mile or two we follow in  
This rosy streak through forest gloom,  
Then for the ample orchard slopes  
And all the earth one snowy bloom!



## MALYN'S DAISY.

You know it. Rays of ashy blue  
Around a centre small and golden,  
An autumn face of cheery hue  
And fashion olden.

When the year rests at Michaelmas  
Before the leaves must vanish faster,  
The country people see it pass  
And call it aster.

It does not come with joy and June;  
It knows God's time is sometimes tardy;  
And waits until we need the boon  
Of spirit hardy.



---

M A L Y N ' S   D A I S Y

---

So unobtrusive, yet so fair,  
About a world it makes so human,  
Its touch of grace is everywhere —  
Just like a woman.

Along the road and up the dike  
It wanders when the noons are hazy,  
To tell us what content is like;  
That's Malyn's daisy.



## ABOVE THE GASPEREAU.

TO H. E. C.

There are sunflowers too in my garden on top  
of the hill,  
Where now in early September the sun has his  
will, —  
The slow autumn sun that goes leisurely, taking  
his fill  
Of life in the orchards and fir woods so moveless  
and still;  
As if, should they stir, they might break some illu-  
sion and spill  
The store of their long summer musing on top of  
the hill.



The crowds of black spruces in tiers from the valley below,

Ranged round their sky-roofed coliseum, mount row after row.

How often there, rank above rank, they have watched for the slow

Silver-lanterned processions of twilight, — the moon's come and go!

How often as if they expected some bugle to blow,

Announcing a bringer of news they were breathless to know,

They have hushed every leaf, — to hear only the murmurous flow

Of the small mountain river sent up from the valley below!

How still through the sweet summer sun, through the soft summer rain,



They have stood there awaiting the summons  
should bid them attain

The freedom of knowledge, the last touch of  
truth to explain

The great golden gist of their brooding, the mar-  
vellous train

Of thought they have followed so far, been so  
strong to sustain,—

The bright gospel of sun and the pure revelations  
of rain!

Then the orchards that dot, all in order, the green  
valley floor,

Every tree with its boughs weighed to earth, like  
a tent from whose door

Not a lodger looks forth, — yet the signs are there  
gay and galore,

The great ropes of red fruitage and russet, crisp  
snow to the core.



Can the dark-eyed Romany here have deserted  
of yore

Their camp at the coming of frost? Will they  
seek it no more?

Who dwells in St. Eulalie's village? Who  
knows the fine lore

Of the tribes of the apple-trees there on the green  
valley floor?

Who, indeed? From the blue mountain gorge  
to the dikes by the sea,

Goes that stilly wanderer, small Gaspereau; who  
but he

Should give the last hint of perfection, the touch  
that sets free

From the taut string of silence the whisper of  
beauties to be!

The very sun seems to have tarried, turned back  
a degree,



To lengthen out noon for the apple-folk here by  
the sea.

What is it? Who comes? What's abroad on the  
blue mountainside?

A hush has been laid on the leaves and will not  
be defied.

Is the great Scarlet Hunter at last setting out on  
his ride

From the North with deliverance now? Were  
the lights we descried

Last night in the heavens his camp-fires seen far  
and wide,

The white signal of peace for whose coming the  
ages have cried?

"Expectancy lingers; fulfilment postponed," I  
replied,

When soul said uneasily, "Who is it haunts your  
hillside?"



All the while not a word from my sunflowers  
here on the hill.

And to-night when the stars over Blomidon  
flower and fill

The blue Northern garden of heaven, so pale and  
so still,

From the lordly king-aster Aldebaran there by  
the sill

Of the East, where the moonlight will enter, not  
one will fulfil

A lordlier lot than my sunflowers here on the  
hill.

So much for mere fact, mere impression. So  
much I portray

Of the atmosphere, colour, illusion of one  
autumn day,

In the little Acadian village above the Grand  
Pré;



Just the quiet of orchards and firs, where the  
sun had full sway,  
And the river went trolling his soft wander-song  
to the bay,  
While roseberry, aster, and sagaban tangled his  
way.  
Be you their interpreter, reasoner; tell what they  
say,  
These children of silence whose patient regard  
I portray.

You Londoner, walking in Bishopsgate, stroll-  
ing the Strand,  
Some morning in autumn afford, at a fruit-  
dealer's stand,  
The leisure to look at his apples there ruddy and  
tanned.  
Then ask, when he's smiling to serve you, if  
choice can command



A Gravenstein grown oversea on Canadian land.  
(And just for the whim's sake, for once, you'll  
have no other brand!)

How teach you to tell them? Pick one, and  
with that in your hand,

Bethink you awhile as you turn again into the  
Strand.

"What if," you will say, — so smooth in your  
hand it will lie,

So round and so firm, of so rich a red to the eye,  
Like a dash of Fortuny, a tinge of some Indian  
dye,

While you turn it and toss, mark the bloom, ere  
you taste it and try, —

"Now what if this grew where the same bright  
pavilion of sky

Is stretched o'er the valley and hillside he bids  
me descry,



The windless valley of peace, where the seasons  
go by,  
And the river goes down through the orchards  
where long shadows lie! ”

There's the fruit in your hand, in your ears is  
the roar of the street,  
The pulse of an empire keeping its volume and  
beat,  
Its sure come and go day and night, while we  
sleep or we eat.  
Taste the apple, bite in to the juice; how abundant and sweet!  
As sound as your own English heart, and wholesome as wheat.  
There grow no such apples as that in your  
Bishopsgate street.  
Or perhaps in St. Helen's Place, when your  
business is done



And the ledgers put by, you will think of the  
hundred and one

Commissions and errands to do; but what under  
the sun

Was that, so important? Ah, yes! the new  
books overrun

The old shelves. It is high time to order a new  
set begun.

Then off to the joiner's. You enter to see his  
plane run

With a long high shriek through the lumber he's  
working upon.

Then he turns from his shavings to query what  
you would have done.

But homeward 'tis you who make question. That  
song of the blade!

And the sharp sweet cry of the wood, what an  
answer it made!



What stories the joiner must hear, as he plies  
his clean trade,  
Of all the wild life of the forest where long  
shadows wade  
The untrodden moss, and the firs send a journey-  
ing shade  
So slow through the valley so far from the song  
of his blade.

Come back to my orchards a moment. They're  
waiting for you.  
How still are the little grey leaves where the  
pippins peep through!  
The boughs where the ribstons hang red are  
half-breaking in two.  
Above them September in magical soft Northern  
blue  
Has woven the spell of her silence, like frost or  
like dew,



Yet warm as a poppy's red dream. When All  
Saints shall renew  
The beauty of summer awhile, will their dream-  
ing come true?  
Ah, not of my Grand Pré they dream, nor your  
London and you!

Their life is their own, and the surge of it. All  
through the spring  
They pushed forth their buds, and the rainbirds  
at twilight would sing.  
They put forth their bloom, and the world was as  
fairy a thing  
As a Japanese garden. Then midsummer came  
with a zing  
And the clack of the locust; then fruit-time and  
coolness, to bring  
This aftermath deep underfoot with its velvety  
spring.



And they all the while with the fatherly,  
    motherly care,  
Taking sap from the strength of the ground,  
    taking sun from the air,  
Taking chance of the frost and the worm, taking  
    courage to dare,  
Have given their life that the life might be  
    goodly and fair  
In their kind for the seasons to come, with  
    good witness to bear  
How the sturdy old race of the apples could  
    give and not spare.  
To-morrow the harvest begins. We shall rifle  
    them there  
Of the beautiful fruit of their bodies, the crown  
    of their care.  
  
How lovingly then shall the picker set hand to  
    the bough! —



Bid it yield, ere the seed come to earth or the  
graft to the plough,

Not only sweet life for its kind, as the instincts  
allow,

That savour and shape may survive generations  
from now,

But life to its kin who can say, "I am stronger  
than thou," —

Fulfilling a lordlier law than the law of the  
bough.

I heard before dawn, with planets beginning to  
quail, —

"Whoso hath life, let him give, that my purpose  
prevail:

Whoso hath none, let him take, that his strength  
may be hale.

Behold, I have reckoned the tally, I keep the  
full tale.



Whoso hath love, let him give, lest his spirit  
grow stale;

Whoso hath none, let him die; he shall wither  
and fail.

Behold I will plenish the loss at the turn of the  
scale.

He hath law to himself, who hath love; ye shall  
hope and not quail."

Then the sun arose, and my sunflowers here on  
the hill,

In free ceremonial turned to the East to fulfil  
Their daily observance, receiving his peace and  
his will, —

The lord of their light who alone bids the dark-  
ness be nil,

The lord of their love who alone bids the life in  
them thrill;

Undismayed and serene, they awaited him here  
on the hill.



Ah, the patience of earth! Look down at the  
dark pointed firs;

They are carved out of blackness; one pattern  
recurs and recurs.

They crowd all the gullies and hillsides, the  
gashes and spurs,

As silent as death. What an image! How  
nature avers

The goodness of calm with that taciturn beauty  
of hers!

As silent as sleep. Yet the life in them climbs  
and upstirs.

They too have received the great law, know  
that haste but defers

The perfection of time,—the initiate gospeller  
firs.

So year after year, slow ring upon ring, they  
have grown,



Putting infinite long-loving care into leafage  
and cone,

By the old ancient craft of the earth they have  
pondered and known

In the dead of the hot summer noons, as still  
as a stone.

Not for them the gay fruit of the thorn, nor the  
high scarlet roan,

Nor the plots of the deep orchard-land where  
the apples are grown.

In winter the wind, all huddled and shuddering,  
came

To warm his old bones by the fires of sunset  
afame

Behind the black house of the firs. When the  
moose-birds grew tame

In the lumberer's camps in the woods, what  
marvellous fame



His talk and the ice of his touch would spread  
and proclaim,  
Of the berg and the floe of the lands without  
nation or name,  
Where the earth and the sky, night and noon,  
north and south are the same,  
The white and awful Nirvana of cold whence  
he came!

Then April, some twilight picked out with a great  
yellow star,  
Returning, like Hylas long lost and come back  
with his jar  
Of sweet living water at last, having wandered  
so far,  
Leads the heart out-of-doors, and the eye to the  
point of a spar,  
At whose base in the half-melted snow the first  
Mayflowers are, —



And there the first robin is pealing below the  
great star.

So soon, oversoon, the full summer. Within  
those dark boughs,

Deliberate and far, a faltering reed-note will  
rouse

The shy transports of earth, till the wood-crea-  
tures hear where they house,

And grow bold as the tremble-eared rabbits that  
nibble and mouse.

While up through the pasture-lot, startling the  
sheep as they browse,

Where kingbirds and warblers are piercing the  
heat's golden drowse,

Some girl, whom the sun has made tawny, the  
wind had to blowse,

Will come there to gentle her lover beneath  
those dark boughs.



Then out of the hush, when the grasses are  
frosty and old,  
Will the chickadee's tiny alarm against winter  
be rolled ;  
And soon, when the ledges and ponds are bitten  
with cold,  
The honk of the geese, that wander-cry stirring  
and bold,  
Will sound through the night, where those hardy  
mariners hold  
The uncharted course through the dark, as it  
is from of old.

Ah, the life of the woods, how they share and  
partake of it all,  
These evergreens, silent as Indians, solemn and  
tall !  
From the goldenwing's first far-heard awaken-  
ing call,



The serene flute of the thrush in his high beech  
hall,  
And the pipe of the frog, to the bannered ap-  
proach of the fall,  
And the sullen wind, when snow arrives on a  
squall,  
Trooping in all night from the North with news  
would appal  
Any outposts but these; with a zest they partake  
of it all.

Lo, out of the hush they seem to mount and  
aspire!  
From basement to tip they have builded, with  
heed to go higher,  
One circlet of branches a year with their lift of  
green spire.  
Nay, rather they seem to repose, having done  
with desire,



Awaiting the frost, with the fruit scarlet-bright  
on the briar,  
Each purpose fulfilled, each ardour that bade  
them aspire.

Then hate be afar from the bite of the axe that  
shall fell  
These keepers of solitude, makers of quiet, who  
dwell  
On the slopes of the North. And clean be the  
hand that shall quell  
The tread of the sap that was wont to go mount-  
ing so well,  
Round on round with the sun in a spiral, slow  
cell after cell,  
As a bell-ringer climbs in a turret. That resinous  
smell  
From the eighth angel's hand might have risen  
with the incense to swell



His offering in heaven, when the half-hour's silence befell.

Behold, as the prayers of the saints that went  
up to God's knees

In John's Revelation, the silence and patience  
of these

Our brothers of orchard and hill, the unhurrying  
trees,

To better the burden of earth till the dark suns  
freeze,

Shall go out to the stars with the sound of  
Acadian seas,

And the scent of the wood-flowers blowing about  
their great knees.

To-night when Altair and Alshain are ruling  
the West,

Whence Boötes is driving his dogs to long hunting  
addressed;



With Alioth plumb over Blomidon standing  
at rest;  
When Algol is leading the Pleiades over the  
crest  
Of the magical East, and the South puts Al-  
pherat to test  
With Menkar just risen; will come, like a sigh  
from Earth's breast,  
The first sob of the tide turning home, — one  
distraught in his quest  
Forever, and calling forever the wind in the  
west.

And to-night there will answer the ghost of a  
sigh on the hill,  
So small you would say, Is it wind, or the frost  
with a will  
Walking down through the woods, who to-  
morrow shall show us his skill



In yellows and reds? So noiseless, it hardly  
will thrill

The timorous aspens, which tremble when all  
else is still;

Yet the orchards will know, and the firs aware  
on the hill.

“O Night, I am old, I endure. Since my be-  
ing began,

When out of the dark the aurora spread up like  
a fan,

I have founded the lands and the islands; the  
hills are my plan.

I have covered the pits of the earth with my  
bridge of one span.

From the Horn to Dunedin unbroken my long  
rollers ran,

From Pentland and Fastnet and Foyle to Bras  
d'Or and Manan,



To dredge and upbuild for the creatures of tribe  
and of clan.

Lo, now who shall end the contriving my fingers  
began? ”

Then the little wind that blows from the great  
star-drift

Will answer, “Thou tide in the least of the  
planets I lift,

Considers the journeys of light. Are thy journey-  
ings swift?

Thy sands are as smoke to the star-banks I  
huddle and shift.

Peace! I have seeds of the grasses to scatter  
and sift.

I have freighting to do for the weed and the  
frail thistle drift.

“O ye apples and firs, great and small are  
as one in the end.



Because ye had life to the full, and spared not  
to spend;

Because ye had love of your kind, to cherish and  
fend;

Held hard the good instinct to thrive, cleaving  
close to life's trend;

Nor questioned where impulse had origin, — pur-  
pose might tend;

Now, beauty is yours, and the freedom whose  
promptings transcend

Attainment forever, through death with new  
being to blend.

O ye orchards and woods, death is naught, love  
is all in the end."

Ah, friend of mine over the sea, shall we not  
discern,

In the life of our brother the beech and our  
sister the fern,



As St. Francis would call them (his Minorites,  
too, would we learn!),  
In death but a door to new being no creature  
may spurn,  
But must enter for beauty's completion, — pass  
up in his turn  
To the last round of joy, yours and mine, whence  
to think and discern?

Who shall say " the last round? " Have I passed  
by the exit of soul?  
From behind the tall door that swings outward,  
replies no patrol  
To our restless *Qui vive?* when is paid each  
implacable toll.  
Not a fin of the tribes shall return, having cleared  
the great shoal;  
Not a wing of the migrants come back from  
below the dark knoll;



Yet the zest of the flight and the swimming who  
fails to extol?

Saith the Riddle, "The parts are all plain;  
ye may guess at the whole."

I guess, "Immortality, knowledge, survival of  
Soul."

To-night, with the orchards below and the firs  
on the hill

Asleep in the long solemn moonlight and taking  
no ill,

A hand will open the sluice of the great sea-  
mill, —

Start the gear and the belts of the tide. Then  
a murmur will fill

The hollows of midnight with sound, when all  
else is still,

A promise to hearten my sunflowers here on the  
hill.



## THE BALLAD OF FATHER HUDSON.

You may doubt, but I heard the story  
Just as I tell it to you;  
And whatever you think of the setting,  
I believe the substance true.

The great North Seaboard Province,  
From Fundy to Chaleurs,  
Is a country of many waters  
And sombre hills of fir,

Where the moose still treads his snow-yard,  
Breaking his paths to browse,  
Where the caribou rove the barrens,  
And the bear and the beaver house;



Where Killooleet sings from the ridge-pole  
All through the night and the rain,  
When the great blue Northern Summer  
Comes back to the wilds again.

In that land of many rivers,  
Bogan and lake and stream,  
You may follow the trail in the water  
With the paddle's bend and gleam,

Where the canoe, like a shadow  
Among the shadows, slips  
Under the quiet alders  
And over the babbling rips;

You may go for a week together,  
Reading footmark and trace  
Of the wild shy woodland creatures,  
Ere you meet a human face.



There where the Loyalists came  
And the houses of men were few,  
Little was all their wealth  
And great were the hardships they knew ;

But greater the hardy faith  
They kept unflinching and fine,  
And chose to be naught in the world  
For the pride of a loyal line.

And there came Father Hudson,  
As I've heard my father tell,  
To serve the wilderness missions,  
With sound of a Sunday bell.

Sober he was and a toiler,  
Cared not for ease nor place ;  
They speak of his humour, too,  
And the long droll shaven face.



Labour he did, and spared not,  
In that vineyard wild and rough,  
And often was sore with travel,  
And often hungry enough,

Doubt not, as he carried the word  
By portage and stream and trail,  
That still in the mind of his people  
The fire of truth should prevail.

And once was a church to build,  
Little, lonely, apart,  
Hardly more than a token  
In the forest's great green heart.

With his own hands he reared it,  
And often was wet to the hide,  
And often slept on the shavings  
Till the birds sang outside ;



Then up in the fragrant morning,  
And back to hammer and saw,  
Building into the timbers  
Love and devotion and awe.

So the fair summer went by,  
And the church was finished at last;  
But Father Hudson was called  
To a country still more vast.

In the land of the creaking snowshoe  
And the single track in the snow,  
There's many a thing of wonder  
No man will ever know.

It happened about the feast  
Of the blessed Nativity,  
When the snow lay heavy and silent  
On every bending tree,



When the great north lights were stalking  
Through the purple solitude,  
Father Hudson's successor  
Passed by the church in the wood.

And it came to his mind to ponder  
What the requital may be  
Of toil that is done in the body,  
When the soul is at last set free;

And whether the flame of fervour  
That is quenched in service here,  
Survives through self-surrender  
To illumine another sphere.

Then he saw the place all lighted,  
Though it was not the hour of prayer,  
And the strains of a triumphing organ  
Came to him on the air.



In amazement he turned aside.  
Who could the player be?  
And who had lighted the lights?  
The door still fast, the key

On its nail in the little porch!  
He turned, put one foot on the sill,  
Unlocked, opened, and entered.  
The church was dark and still!

The white-robed spruces around it  
Stood still with never a word;  
The sifting snow at the window  
Was all the good man heard.

Verily, Father Hudson,  
Strong was thy sturdy creed,  
But stronger and more enduring  
The humble and holy deed,



Which so could enthrall the senses  
And lend the spirit sight  
To behold the glory of labour  
And love's availing might.

O brave are the single-hearted  
Who deal with this life, and dare  
To live by the inward vision, —  
In the soul's native air.



## THE WORD AT ST. KAVIN'S.

Once at St. Kavin's door  
I rested. No sign more  
Of discontent escaped me from that day.  
For there I overheard  
A Brother of the Word  
Expound the grace of poverty, and say:

Thank God for poverty  
That makes and keeps us free,  
That lets us go our unobtrusive way,  
Glad of the sun and rain,  
Upright, serene, humane,  
Contented with the fortune of a day.



Light-hearted as a bird,  
I will obey the word  
That bade the earth take form, the sea subside, —  
That bids the wild wings go  
Each year from line to snow,  
When Spring unfurls her old green flag for  
guide, —

That bids the fleeting hosts  
Along the shelving coasts  
Once more adventure far by sound and stream, —  
Bids everything alive  
Awaken and revive, —  
Resume the unperished glory and the dream.

I too, with fear put by,  
Confront my destiny,  
With not a wish but to arise and go,  
Where beauty still may lead  
From creed to larger creed,  
Thanking my Maker that he made me so.



For I would shun no task  
That kindliness may ask,  
Nor flinch at any duty to my kind;  
Praying but to be freed  
From ignorance and greed,  
Grey fear and dull despondency of mind.

So I would readjust  
The logic of the dust,  
The servile hope that puts its trust in things.  
Ephemera of earth,  
Of more than fleeting worth,  
Are we, endowed with rapture as with wings.

(Type of the soul of man,  
The slight yet stable plan!  
Those creatures perishable as the dew,  
How buoyantly they ride  
The vast and perilous tide,  
Free as the air their courses to pursue!)



And I would keep my soul  
Joyous and sane and whole,  
Unshamed by falsehood and unvexed by strife,  
Unalien in that clear  
And radiant atmosphere  
That still surrounds us with a larger life,

When we have laid aside  
Our truculence and pride,  
Craven self-seeking, turbulent self-will,  
Resolved this very day  
No longer to obey  
The tyrant Mammon who begods us still.

All selfish gain at best  
Brings but profound unrest  
And inward loss, despite our loud professions.  
Think therefore what it is,  
What surety of bliss,  
To be absolved from burdensome possessions!



Shall God, who doth provide  
The majesty and pride  
And beauty of this earth so lavishly,  
Deny them to the poor  
And lowly and obscure?  
Nay, they are given to all justly and free.

And if I share my crust,  
As common manhood must,  
With one whose need is greater than my own,  
Shall I not also give  
His soul, that it may live,  
Of the abundant pleasures I have known?

And so, if I have wrought,  
Amassed or conceived aught  
Of beauty or intelligence or power,  
It is not mine to hoard;  
It stands there to afford  
Its generous service simply as a flower.



How soon, my friends, how soon  
We should obtain the boon  
Of shining peace for which the toiler delves,  
If only we would give  
Our spirit room to live, —  
Be, here and now, our brave untarnished selves;

If only we would dare  
Espouse the good and fair  
Our soul, unbound by custom, still perceives;  
And without compromise  
Or favour in men's eyes  
Live by the truth each one of us believes!

Bow not to vested wrong  
That we have served too long,  
Pawning our birthright for a tinsel star!  
Shall the soul take upon her  
Time-service and mouth-honour?  
Behold the fir-trees, how unswerved they are!



Native to sun and storm,  
They cringe not nor conform,  
Save to the gentle law their sound heart knows;  
Each day enough for them  
To rise, cone, branch, and stem,  
A leaf-breadth higher in their tall repose.

Ah, what a travesty  
Of man's ascent, were I  
To bear myself less royally than they,  
After the ages spent  
In spirit's betterment,  
Through rounds of aspiration and decay!

For surely I have grown  
Within a cleft of stone,  
With spray of mountain torrents in my face.  
Slow soaring ring by ring  
On moveless tiled wing,  
I have seen earth below me sink through space.



I too in polar night  
Have hungered, gaunt and white,  
Alone amid the awful silences;  
And fled on gaudy fin,  
When the blue tides came in,  
Through coral gardens under tropic seas.

And wheresoe'er I strove,  
The greater law was love,  
A faith too fine to falter or mistrust;  
There was no wanton greed,  
Depravity of breed,  
Malice nor cant nor enmity unjust.

Nay, not till I was man,  
Learned I to scheme and plan  
The blackest depredation on my kind,  
Converting to my gain  
My fellow's need and pain,  
In chartered pillage ruthless and refined.



Therefore, my friends, I say,  
Back to the fair sweet way  
Our mother Nature taught us long ago, —  
The large primeval mood,  
Leisure and amplitude,  
The dignity of patience strong and slow.

Let us go in once more,  
By some blue mountain door,  
And hold communion with the forest leaves,  
Where long ago we trod  
The Ghost House of the God,  
Through orange dawns and amethystine eves.

There bright-robed choristers  
Make music in the firs,  
Rejoicing in their service all day long;  
And there the whole night through,  
Along the dark still blue,  
What glorying hosts with starry tapers throng!



There in some deep ravine  
Whose walls are living green,  
A sanctuary spacious, cool, and dim,  
At earth-refreshing morn,  
The pure white clouds are born, —  
The incense of the ground sent up to Him.

No slighted task is there,  
But equal craft and care  
And love in irresistible accord,  
The test and sign of art,  
Bestowed through every part;  
No thought of recognition or reward.

In that diviner air  
We shall grow wise and fair,  
Not frayed by hurry nor distraught by noise, —  
Learn once again to be  
Noble, courageous, free, —  
Regain our primal ecstasy and poise.



Calm in the deep control  
Of firmamental soul,  
Let us abide unfretful and secure,  
Knowledge and reason bent  
To further soul's intent, —  
Her veiled dim purposes remote yet sure.

For soul has led us now,  
Science unravels how,  
Through cell and tissue up from dust to man;  
And will lead by and by,  
No logic tells us why,  
To fill her purport in the ampler plan.

Ah, trust the soul, my friends,  
To seek her own great ends  
Revealed not in the fashion of the hour!  
For she outlives intact  
The insufficient act,  
Herself the source and channel of all power.



The soul survives, unmarred,  
The mind care-worn and scarred,  
That still is anxious over little things,  
To come unto her own,  
Through benefits unknown  
And the green beauty of a thousand springs.

From infinite resource  
She holds her gleaming course  
Through toil, distraction, hindrance, and dismay,  
Till some high destiny,  
Accomplished by and by,  
Reveals the splendid hope that was her stay.

Therefore should every hour  
Replenish her with power  
Of joy and love and freedom and fresh truth,  
That we even in age  
May share her heritage  
Of ancient wisdom with the heart of youth.



Lore of the worldly wise

Is folly in her eyes.

All-energy, all-knowledge, and all-love,

Aware of deeps below

This pageant that we know,

Hers is the very faith accounted of

By Him who rose and bade

His friends be not afraid,

When peril rocked their fishing-boat at sea, —

Who bade the sick not fear,

The sad be of good cheer,

And in the hour they were made whole and free.

The sceptic sees but part

Of Nature's mighty heart.

A wide berth would I give that dangerous  
shoal —

Steer for the open sea,

No sight of land, but free.

Trusting my senses, shall I doubt my soul?



Let me each day anew  
My outward voyage pursue  
For the Far Islands and the Apple Lands.  
Till through the breaking gloom  
Some evening they shall loom,  
With one pale star above the lilac sands.

Ah, that day I shall know  
How the shy wood-flowers grow  
In the deep forest, turning to the light;  
Untrammelled impulse still  
With glad obedient will  
The only guide out of ancestral night.

Oh, I shall comprehend  
Truth at my journey's end, —  
What being is, and what I strive to be, —  
What soul in beauty's guise  
Eludes our wistful eyes,  
Yet surely is akin to you and me.



Therefore, towards that supreme  
Knowledge, that unveiled dream,  
That promise of our life from day to day,  
The grace of joyousness  
Abide with us to bless  
And help us forth along the Perfect Way!

The voice of the good priest  
In benediction ceased;  
The congregation like a murmur rose;  
And when I set my pack  
Once more upon my back,  
'Twas light as any thistle-down that blows.



CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST.  
KAVIN'S.

To the assembled folk  
At great St. Kavin's spoke  
Young Brother Amiel on Christmas eve;  
I give you joy, my friends,  
That as the round year ends,  
We meet once more for gladness by God's leave.

On other festal days  
For penitence or praise  
Or prayer we meet, or fulness of thanksgiving;  
To-night we calendar  
The rising of that star  
Which lit the old world with new joy of living.



Ah, we disparage still  
The Tidings of Good Will,  
Discrediting Love's gospel now as then!  
And with the verbal creed  
That God is love indeed,  
Who dares make Love his god before all men?

Shall we not, therefore, friends,  
Resolve to make amends  
To that glad inspiration of the heart;  
To grudge not, to cast out  
Selfishness, malice, doubt,  
Anger and fear; and for the better part,

To love so much, so well,  
The spirit cannot tell  
The range and sweep of her own boundary!  
There is no period  
Between the soul and God;  
Love is the tide, God the eternal sea.



Of old, men walked by fear;  
And if their God seemed near,  
It was the Avenger unto whom they bowed, --  
A wraith of their own woes,  
Vain, cruel, and morose,  
With anger and vindictiveness endowed.

Of old, men walked by hate;  
The ruthless were the great;  
Their crumbling kingdoms stayed by might alone.  
Men saw vast empires die,  
Nor guessed the reason why, —  
The simple law of life as yet unknown

As love. Then came our Lord,  
Proclaiming the accord  
Of soul and nature in love's rule and sway,  
The lantern that he set  
To light us, shining yet  
Along the Perfect Path wherein we stray.



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CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST. KAVIN'S

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To-day we walk by love;  
To strive is not enough,  
Save against greed and ignorance and might.  
We apprehend peace comes  
Not with the roll of drums,  
But in the still processions of the night.

And we perceive, not awe  
But love is the great law  
That binds the world together safe and whole.  
The splendid planets run  
Their courses in the sun;  
Love is the gravitation of the soul.

In the profound unknown,  
Illumined, fair, and lone,  
Each star is set to shimmer in its place.  
In the profound divine  
Each soul is set to shine,  
And its unique appointed orbit trace.



There is no near nor far,  
Where glorious Algebar  
Swings round his mighty circuit through the  
    night,

Yet where without a sound  
The winged seed comes to ground,  
And the red leaf seems hardly to alight.

One force, one lore, one need  
For satellite and seed,  
In the serene benignity for all.  
Letting her time-glass run  
With star-dust, sun by sun,  
In Nature's thought there is no great nor small.

There is no far nor near  
Within the spirit's sphere.  
The summer sunset's scarlet-yellow wings  
Are tinged with the same dye  
That paints the tulip's ply.  
And what is colour but the soul of things?



(The earth was without form;  
God moulded it with storm,  
Ice, flood, and tempest, gleaming tint and hue;  
Lest it should come to ill  
For lack of spirit still,  
He gave it colour, — let the love shine through.)

My joy of yesterday  
Is just as far away  
As the first rapture of my man's estate.  
A lifetime or an hour  
Has all there is of power.  
In Nature's love there is no small nor great.

Of old, men said, "Sin not;  
By every line and jot  
Ye shall abide; man's heart is false and vile."  
Christ said, "By Love alone  
In man's heart is God known;  
Obey the word no falsehood can defile."



The wise physician there  
Of our distress had care,  
And laid his finger on the pulse of time.  
And there to eyes unsealed  
Earth's secret lay revealed,  
The truth that knows not any age nor clime.

The heart of the ancient wood  
Was a grim solitude,  
The sanction of a worship no less grim;  
Man's ignorance and fear  
Peopled the natural year  
With forces evil and malign to him.

He saw the wild, rough way  
Of cosmic powers at play;  
He did not see the love that lay below.  
Jehovah, Mars, and Thor,  
These were the gods of war  
He made in his own likeness long ago.



Then came the Word, and said,  
"See how the world is made, —  
With how much loving kindness, ceaseless care.  
Not Wrath, but Love, call then  
The Lord of beasts and men,  
Whose hand sustains the sparrows in the air."

And since that day we prove  
Only how great is love,  
Nor to this hour its greatness half believe.  
For to what other power  
Will life give equal dower,  
Or chaos grant one moment of reprieve!

Look down the ages' line,  
Where slowly the divine  
Evinces energy, puts forth control;  
See mighty love alone  
Transmuting stock and stone,  
Infusing being, helping sense and soul.



And what is energy,  
In-working, which bids be  
The starry pageant and the life of earth?  
What is the genesis  
Of every joy and bliss,  
Each action dared, each beauty brought to birth?

What hangs the sun on high?  
What swells the growing rye?  
What bids the loons cry on the Northern lake?  
What stirs in swamp and swale,  
When April winds prevail,  
And all the dwellers of the ground awake?

What lurks in the dry seed,  
But waiting to be freed,  
Asleep and patient for a hundred years?  
Till of earth, rain, and sun,  
A miracle is done,  
Some magic calls the sleeper and he hears, —



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CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST. KAVIN'S

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Arouses, puts forth blade  
And leaf and bud, arrayed  
Some morning in that garb of rosy snow,  
The same fair matchless flower  
As shed its petal-shower  
Through old Iberian gardens long ago.  
  
What is it that endures,  
Survives, persists, immures  
Life's very self, preserving type and plan? —  
Yet learns the scope of change,  
As the long cycles range, —  
Looks through the eyes of bluebird, wolf, and  
man?

What lurks in the deep gaze  
Of the old wolf? Amaze,  
Hope, recognition, gladness, anger, fear.  
But deeper than all these  
Love muses, yearns, and sees,  
And is the self that does not change nor veer



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CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST. KAVIN'S

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Not love of self alone,  
Struggle for lair and bone,  
But self-denying love of mate and young,  
Love that is kind and wise,  
Knows trust and sacrifice,  
And croons the old dark universal tongue.

In Nature you behold  
But strivings manifold,  
Battle and conflict, tribe warring against tribe?  
Look deeper, and see all  
That death cannot appal,  
Failure intimidate, nor fortune bribe.

Our brothers of the air  
Who come with June must dare,  
Be bold and strong, have knowledge, lust, and  
choice;  
Yet think, when glad hosts throng  
The summer woods with song,  
Love gave them beauty and love lends them voice.



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CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST. KAVIN'S

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Love surely in some form  
Bade them brave night and storm, —  
Was the dark binnacle that held them true,  
Those tiny mariners  
No unknown voyage deters,  
When the old migrant longing stirs anew.

And who has understood  
Our brothers of the wood,  
Save he who put off guile and every guise  
Of violence, — made truce  
With panther, bear, and moose,  
As beings like ourselves whom love makes wise?

For they, too, do love's will,  
Our lesser clansmen still;  
The House of Many Mansions holds us all;  
Courageous, glad, and hale,  
They go forth on the trail,  
Hearing the message, hearkening to the call.



Oh, not fortuitous chance  
Alone, nor circumstance,  
Begot the creatures after their own kind;  
But always loving will  
Was present to fulfil  
The primal purpose groping up to mind.

Adversity but bade  
New puissance spring to aid,  
New powers develop, new aptness come in play;  
Yet never function wrought  
Capacity from nought, —  
Gave skill and mastery to the shapes of clay;

For always while new need  
Evoked new thought through deed,  
Old self was there to ponder, choose, and strive.  
Fortune might mould, evolve,  
But impulse must resolve,  
Equipped at length to know, rejoice, and thrive.



And evermore must Love  
Hearten, foresee, approve,  
And look upon the work and find it good ;  
Else would all effort fail, —  
The very stars avail  
Less than a swarm of fireflies in a wood.

Take love out of the world  
One day, and we are hurled  
Back into night, to perish in the void.  
Love is the very girth  
And cincture of this earth,  
No stitch to be unloosed, no link destroyed.

However wild and long  
The battle of the strong,  
Stronger and longer are the hours of peace,  
When gladness has its way  
Under the fair blue day,  
And life aspires, takes thought, bids good increase.



So dawns the awaited hour  
When the great cosmic power  
Of love was first declared by Christ; so too  
To-day we keep in mind  
His name who taught mankind  
That open secret old, yet ever new, —

Commemorate his birth  
Who loved the kindly earth,  
Was gentle, strong, compassionate, humane,  
And tolerant and wise  
And glad, — the very guise  
And height of manhood not to lose again.

Shall we not then forego  
Lavish perfunctory show,  
The burdensome display, the empty gift,  
That we may have to give  
To every soul alive  
Of love's illumination, cheer, and lift?



See rich and poor be fed!  
Break up thy soul for bread,  
Be loaves and fishes to the hungry heart,  
That a great multitude,  
Receiving of thy good,  
May bless the God within thee and depart!

You workman, love your work  
Or leave it. Let no irk  
Unsteady the laborious hand, that still  
Must give the spirit play  
To follow her own way  
To beauty, through devotion, care, and skill.

How otherwise find vent  
For soul's imperious bent,  
Than thro' these hands for wonder-working made,  
When Love the sure and bold  
Guides to the unforetold?  
Blessed the craftsman who is unafraid!



Give Beauty her sweet will,  
Make love your mistress still,  
You lovers, nor delay! God's time be yours.  
Make low-born jealousy  
And doubt ashamed to be,  
And cast old envious gossip out-of-doors.

Believe the truth of love,  
Enact the beauty of love,  
Praise and adore the goodliness of love.  
For we are wise by love,  
And strong and fair through love,  
No less than sainted and inspired with love.

Remember the new word  
The Syrian twilight heard,  
That marvellous discourse which John records,  
The one last great command  
The Master left his band,  
"Love one another!" And our time affords



What greater scope than just  
To execute that trust?  
Love greatly; love; love is life's best employ.  
Neighbour, sweetheart, or friend,  
Love wholly, to love's end;  
So is the round world richer for your joy.

Love only, one or all!  
Measure no great and small!  
Love is a seed, life-bearing, undecayed;  
And that immortal germ  
Past bounds of zone and term  
Will grow and cover the whole world with shade.

Sow love, it cannot fail;  
Adversity's sharp hail  
May cut all else to ground; fair love survives.  
The black frost of despair  
And slander's bitter air, —  
Love will outlast them by a thousand lives.



Be body, mind and soul,  
Subject to love's control,  
Each loving to the limit of love's power;  
And all as one, not three,  
So is man's trinity  
Enhanced and freed and gladdened hour by hour.

Beauty from youth to age,  
The body's heritage,  
Love will not forfeit by neglect nor shame;  
And knowledge, dearly bought,  
Love will account as nought,  
Unless it serve soul's need and body's claim.

Let soul desire, mind ask,  
And body crave; our task  
Be to fulfil each want in love's own way.  
So shall the good and true  
Partake of beauty too,  
And life be helped and greatened day by day.



Spend love, and save it not;  
In act, in wish, in thought,  
Spend love upon this lifetime without stint.  
Let not the heart grow dry,  
As the good hours go by;  
Love now, see earth take on the glory tint.

Open the door to-night  
Within your heart, and light  
The lantern of love there to shine afar.  
On a tumultuous sea  
Some straining craft, maybe,  
With bearings lost, shall sight love's silver star.

THE END.



























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